A

SERMON

Preached at

St. Mary's Truro,

On the Second of *December*, 1697.

Being the Day Appointed for

A Publick Thankſgiving

FOR

PEACE.

By *SIM. PAGET*, Rector of *Truro*.

LONDON,

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TO

The Worſhipful the *Mayor*,

The Right Honourable the *Recorder*,

The Capital Burgeſſes,

And other, the Inhabitants of the Ancient Borough of

TRURO.

Gentlemen,

AMongſt the many Decent and Suitable Demonſtrations of your Joy on the late Thankſgiving-day for Peace, I cannot but with great Pleaſure and Satisfaction call to mind, what a full Congregation we had at Church, and how devoutly every one performed the Publick Service for the Occaſion.

You were then pleaſed to approve of this Sermon, as a Diſcourſe ſuitable to the Occaſion,

caſion, and apt to ſtir Men up to a thankfull Reception of ſo great a Bleſſing. Truſting it will be thought ſo ſtill, and have the ſame effect now it is Printed; I do in particular dedicate it to you, as a thankfull Acknowledgment of the kind Welcome you gave me at my firſt coming to you, and of the many great Civilities and Favours I have received from you ever ſince.

I ſhould have preſented you with it ſooner, but that my great Indiſpoſition would not ſuffer me to tranſcribe it for the Preſs.

I pray God requite you for all your Favours, and bleſs you both in your Spiritual and Temporal Intereſts, which is, and ever ſhall be the hearty Prayer of,

Dear Sirs,

Your moſt obliged, and

Faithfull Servant,

Sim. Paget.

A

Thankſgiving-Sermon, &c.

Luke II. 14.

Glory to God in the Higheſt, and on Earth Peace, Good will towards Men.

THE Words are a joyfull and congratulatory Acclamation of the Bleſſed Angels, uſhering into this lower world, the Son of God, the Prince of Peace. Him they attend with Branches of Palms, inſtead of flaming Swords; with good Tidings of great Joy to all People, inſtead of curſing *Meros*, burning *Sodom*, or deſtroying the *Aſſyrian* Camp.

Him they attend, not as the Reverſe of a Gracious God, as an Evil Deity naturally eclipſing and oppoſing the Emanations of Divine Goodneſs; nor as a Man of War, cauſing fear and dread to fall upon Mankind; dealing in Fury and executing Vengeance, tho' a good Deity: But as the Prince of Peace, diſplaying the Banners of Divine Love

over Mankind, and reconciling the rebellious World to the Favour and Beneficence of his Heavenly Father. As the Prince of Peace! procuring and eſtabliſhing Peace between Man and Man, as well as between Man and God; *commanding them to beat their Swords into Plow-ſhares, and their Spears into Pruning hooks; Nation not to lift up Sword againſt Nation, nor to learn War any more.*

Iſa. 2. 4.

Well might a winged Embaſſy deſcend from the Court of Heaven, and call upon Mankind to attend the Arrival of *ſuch* a Prince, with the utmoſt Demonſtrations of Honour and Joy. Well might the whole World reſound with Anthems of *Glory to God in the Higheſt*, when *Peace* is proclaimed *on Earth*, as the bleſſed effect of God's *good will towards Men.* When the Divine Goodneſs breaks forth into ſo glorious a Diſplay of it ſelf upon poor Mortals, as to joyn Heaven and Earth together in the mutual Beams of Love and Peace; the greateſt Bleſſing Heaven can beſtow, the greateſt Earth can receive.

And may not the occaſion of this ſolemn Day raiſe in *Our* Minds the like chearfull Joy, and devote *Us* to the moſt gratefull Returns of Glory and Praiſe to the ſame gracious God? Now, when the Divine Will has iſſued forth ſuch an over-flowing Tide of Goodneſs upon the Face of the Earth, and the Son of Righteouſneſs is riſen upon us with ſuch Heal-

Healing in his Wings. Now, when after a long Night of Darkneſs, we are got into the Morning of ſo promiſing a Day; and can behold our reviving Hemiſphere to fill every day more and more, with the beautifull Rays of an advanced Peace. Now, when the *Weapons of War are periſhed*, and the *People that delight in war are ſcattered*, and *the Meek* begin *to inherit the Earth, and to delight themſelves in the abundance of Peace.* When *the Wolf* begins *to dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard to lie down with the Kid, and the ſucking Child to play on the hole of the Aſp; and every man to ſit under his Vine, and under his Fig-tree, and none to make him afraid. Shake thy ſelf from the Duſt, O Zion. Break forth into joy ye waſt places of Jeruſalem. Sing O ye Heavens, for the Lord hath done it: Shout ye lower parts of the Earth: Break forth into ſinging ye Mountains, O Foreſt, and every Tree therein, for the Lord hath Redeemed Jacob, and glorified himſelf in Iſrael.*

2 Sam. 1. 27. Pſ. 68. 30. Pſ. 37. 11. Iſa. 11. 6. Mic. 4. 4. Iſa. 52. 2, 9. Iſa. 44. 23.

And that we may conceive a juſt Eſteem of the Bleſſings we now commemorate, and in ſome meaſure glorifie God as we ought to do, for beſtowing them upon us, I ſhall from this Angelical Doxology do theſe four things.

I. I ſhall make ſome Reflection upon the Excellency and Deſireableneſs of Peace. This the words do plainly imply.

II. I ſhall ſhew what an argument of God's Love and Favour the Bleſſing of Peace is to a People. God's good will towards Men, breaks forth in Peace upon Earth.

III. I ſhall obſerve concerning Peace, how highly conducive it is to the Advancement of God's Glory: On Earth Peace is Glory to God in the Higheſt.

IV. I ſhall conclude with ſome Inferences from the whole, and with ſhewing you after what manner we of this Nation ſhall beſt glorifie God for beſtowing this ineſtimable Bleſſing of Peace upon us.

I. I ſhall make ſome Reflection upon the Excellency and Deſireableneſs of Peace. *Peace*! methinks the word ſounds pleaſant in our Ears; the very naming of it ſtrikes a kind refreſhment to the Heart, and diffuſes a trembling Raviſhment through all the Veins. *On Earth Peace*! 'Twas one of the higheſt Strains the Melodious Angels did ever ſing to Men. They knew not how more irreſiſtibly to charm Mankind, than by ſounding forth the glad Tidings of a bleſſed Peace to them. And indeed

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conſidering, firſt, how unnatural a State of War is to ſociable Creatures; and ſecondly, what dreadfull Calamities do uſually attend the drawn Sword; we cannot but conclude Peace to be of all temporal Bleſſings, the moſt excellent and deſireable.

1. How unnatural a State of War is to ſociable Creatures. That Man by original Creation was made for Society; bound by the uſe of Speech and Reaſon, and a tacit inclination of Mind, as well as the Neceſſities of humane Nature, to be a Companion and Friend, to eſteem, and love, and aſſiſt the reſt of his Fellow-creatures, is a truth, I think not to be denied, howſoever diſputed by ſome of late Years, who would fain reduce a State of Nature into a State of War. For we find even in this corrupted State of Nature, wherein the unruly Luſts and Paſſions of Men have advanced the Principle of ſelf-Preſervation to the offenſive part, and improved the Cruelties of War to ſuch vaſt Deſtructions of Mankind; even here we find the Voice of Nature to cry *againſt* the alarms of War, though it cannot cry them *down*; and to *proclaim* an univerſal Peace, as moſt agreeable to our Natures, though it cannot *eſtabliſh* one. Which plainly ſhews, that Men muſt in ſome meaſure put off their Natures, before they can ingage in War; and become Wolves and Tygers before they can herd into Armies

Armies to prey upon one another. And this ſhews the great Excellency and Deſireableneſs of Peace, to the more civilized part of Mankind eſpecially, who always eſteem that to be moſt excellent and deſireable, which is moſt agreeable to the innocent Principles of uncorrupted Nature.

'Tis true indeed, ſince we have loſt our Innocency, we have made War neceſſary; and God allows of it, we find, as a neceſſary Determination of Right between one Nation and another. But this is no argument for its agreeableneſs to our Natures, no more than it argues that Phyſick ſha'nt make the Patient ſick, becauſe he takes it out of neceſſity for the recovery of his Health.

'Tis true again, that not only particular Perſons, as *Nero*, *Domitian*, and others; but likewiſe whole Nations of People have been naturally addicted to a State of Immanity and War; as the *Achæans* and *Heniochs* about the *Pontian* Sea, who were wont to ſlaughter one another for Food, as we do beaſts; and to ſerve up their Children as Dainties to be eaten at their Banquets. But to this it may be anſwered, that the univerſal Nature of Man ought not to be concluded from a few inſtances. Shall we ſay that it is natural for all Mankind not to ſee, becauſe ſome few perſons are born blind? And beſides ſuch a Nature as this is not ſo much original as acquired;

red; 'tis an improvement made by Education and Cuſtom upon the Stock of corrupted Nature. And ſometimes, without doubt, 'tis owing to the juſt Vengeance of God, who, for their great Abominations, does give over a people to a rebrobate Mind, and to do thoſe things which are not convenient.

2. What dreadful Calamities do uſually attend the drawn Sword. *Thucidides* diſcourſing of War, calls it the *Idea of all Evil*; as if the whole *Poſſe* of Evils was then rendevouzed, and followed the Camp in a body. And certainly of all temporal Calamities, there are none greater, none of more general Influence upon the quiet and proſperity of Mankind, than thoſe are which proceed from War. And therefore the Scriptures do repreſent War to us under the Similitude of ſuch things, as are moſt dreadfull to humane Nature, and moſt deſtructive of the whole Compoſition of this world's Happineſs. Thus *Jer.* 13. 24. 'tis compared to a *Wind of the Wilderneſs, ſcattering and deſtroying all before it. Jer.* 12. 12. 'tis ſaid to be *Sword devouring from one end of the land to the other. Joel* 2. 3. 'tis ſet off by a *dreadfull Fire running through a land as rich as Eden, and leaving nothing behind it but a deſolate Wilderneſs.* And *Jer.* 4. 19. they that live in the times of War, aud behold and feel the dreadfull Calamites of it, are repreſented there, as lying under the greateſt Conſternations

and

and Perplexities imaginable. *My Bowels! my Bowels! I am pained at my very heart, my heart maketh a noiſe in me, I cannot hold my Peace, becauſe thou haſt heard, O my Soul, the ſound of the Trumpet, the alarm of War.*

And if from theſe faint Reſemblances of Scripture, we proceed to the Thing it ſelf; and conſider the various miſeries of War in the lamentable Experience of all Men, whether in a private, publick, or religious Capacity; we ſhall want a Mind to conceive, and a Tongue to expreſs even the half of their Dreadfulneſs.

Firſt, In a private Capacity. Wherein as God
Zeph. 1.13. threatens by his Prophet *Zephany*, *Mens Goods do become a Booty, and their Houſes a Deſolation; they build Houſes and not inhabit them, they plant Vineyards and drink not the Wine thereof.* Wherein the tender
Nahum 3. 10. Infant is ſnatched from its Mother's Breaſt, *and daſhed in Pieces at the top of all the Streets.* Wives do become Widows to be made a Prey off, and Children are left Fatherleſs, to be robbed and beg their Bread.

2. In a publick Capacity. And here we may
Nahum 3. 10. behold the *honourable Men* of a Nation *to be caſt lots for, and the great ones to be bound in Chains*, and led about in Triumph through the Crowds of inſulting Enemies. Here we may behold men of great

Truſt

Truſt and Employment in Publick Matters, falling to the great Loſs and Danger of the Commonwealth; and even Kings themſelves dying in Battel, and *quenching the light of Iſrael.* For War, as it knows no Laws, ſo it reverences no Magiſtrate; the Higher Power is he that carries the longeſt Sword; and the Beſt Man he, that can do the greateſt Miſchief.

3. In a Religious Capacity. But alas! what a frightfull Scene muſt we open here? What a world of wickedneſs and impiety muſt we bring upon the Stage, to repreſent the Sufferings of Religion in the time of VVar? Here Malice and Revenge, Curſing and Swearing, Riot and Debauchery do Reign and Triumph over proſtrate Vertue. There falſe Chriſts, and falſe Prophets do ariſe, endeavouring to undermine Chriſtianity it ſelf, and, if it were poſſible, to deceive the very Elect. There again, we may behold either the Doors of the Temple ſhut againſt us, or the Temples themſelves raſed to the ground, or which is worſe, made a Stable for Horſes; the Treaſures of the Temple made a Spoil of, and the Miniſters of God mourning, becauſe the meat-offering and drink-offering is cut off from the Houſe of the Lord. I dare but juſt Name theſe things to you, for fear I ſhould ſtrike a damp upon the cheerfull devotion of this

Day, and inſtead of Raiſing your Joy, Depreſs you into Heavineſs.

But why muſt we repreſent War in ſuch a Ghaſtly Viſage, to ſet off the Beauties of Peace? Why muſt we go into the Heat of the Battel, into the Throng of Calamities that attend upon War, to look for the Excellencies of a peaceable Habitation? Alas! Peace wants no ſuch Foil; ſhe's of a more Divine Complexion, than to acquire any Addition to her Beauty from the Fire and Smoak of Hell. Let War appear as Lovely as 'tis poſſible for her to do; either in her Morning Dreſs of a Good Cauſe, or in the Evening Train of Succeſs and Triumph; yet compared to Peace, ſhe's an horrible Monſter; and all the Luſtre, if ſhe has any, like that which the Moon borrows, is derived from the Glories of a deſigned and ſucceeding Peace.

----- *Minor eſt victoria Pace.*
Atque aliquid pejus Pace triumphus habet.

II. I am to ſhew what an Argument of God's Love and Favour, the Bleſſing of Peace is to a People. I muſt confeſs we ought to be very carefull, in aſcribing good events at every turn, to the Love and Favour of God. Becauſe, as the wiſe Man tells us, *No man knoweth either Love or Hatred, by all*

Eccleſ. 9. 1.

all that is before them. The Love of God is, without doubt, grounded upon unerring Foundations, and conſtantly exerts it ſelf in acts of Kindneſs and Beneficence to Mankind. When once God comes to have any Love for a people, all his Diſpenſations towards them are good, and arguments of his Love. But then we muſt conſider, that the ſame dealings of Providence may proceed from different Affections in God; and the good things which he affords to ſome out of Love, he may diſpenſe to others out of Wrath and Hatred. Thus he *gives a King ſometimes in his Anger*, and chaſtiſes an *Hypocritical Nation* under the Triumphs of a proud *Aſſyrian*, who is afterwards to fall into the ſame Calamities himſelf. Hoſ. 13. 11. Iſa. 10.

But that we may aſcribe the good events of Peace to the ſpecial Love and Favour of God, will appear to us, if we do but conſider, firſt, what legible Characters of the divine Goodneſs do appear upon Peace: and ſecondly, how conſtantly God did beſtow it upon his ancient People the Jews, when at any time, by turning from the evil of their ways, they reſtored themſelves to his Love and Favour.

1. What legible Characters of the Divine Goodneſs do appear upon Peace. Now the Characters of Divine Goodneſs are more or leſs legible, according as the acts of Divine Providence are more or

leſs Signal. In things of a lower Nature, and ſuch as concern only private and particular perſons; the Tokens of Divine Goodneſs are not near ſo diſcernable, as they are in weighty matters, and ſuch as concern whole Bodies and Communities of Men; becauſe 'tis highly becoming of God to adopt his Providence in proportion to the worth and value of the thing 'tis concerned about. And therefore Man being of more worth and value than many Sparrows, he is conſequently made by our Saviour to have a more particular providence attending him. *Are not ye of more value than many Sparrows?* Now Peace being a thing of the higheſt worth and value that the Providence of God can be concerned about, in that it frees whole Nations from the Calamities of War, and reſtores to them their Lives and Fortunes, their Liberties and Religion, and all other deſireable Goods, which a State of War is wont to ſubvert and deſtroy: therefore, 'tis but reaſonable to conclude, that the Providence of God is more eſpecially concerned about Peace; and conſequently Men muſt be Blind, if they don't diſcover the manifeſt Tokens of the Divine Goodneſs upon it, and acknowledge it to be one of the greateſt Arguments of God's Love and Favour to a People.

2. How

2. How conſtantly God did beſtow this Bleſſing upon his ancient people the Jews, when at any time, by turning from the evil of their ways, they reſtored themſelves to his Love and Favour. This is a truth ſo well known to every one, that 'twill be needleſs to relate any particulars for the confirmation of it. The whole Hiſtory of that people being but one continued Series and Narrative of the Divine Diſpenſations towards them; either in cauſing the Sword to devour them for their Sins, or in giving them Peace within their Borders upon their ſincere Repentance.

And though God does not govern the World now by ſuch immediate Providences as he did then; neither can we behold ſuch direct Strokes of his hand, in rewarding and bleſſing a beloved people: yet conſidering that God ſtill keeps the Government of the world in his own hands, and governs by the ſame unalterable methods of Wiſdom, and Goodneſs, and Juſtice to the end of the World. Conſidering, that as the Goodneſs of God extends it ſelf to all Creatures in general; ſo the ſpecial Love and Favour of God extends it ſelf to Men and Kingdoms in particular, according as they approach nearer to him in Truth and Holineſs; and that this ſpecial Love and Favour of God is always exerting it ſelf in the greateſt acts of Kindneſs and Benefi-

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cence to Mankind; amongſt which, Peace is the greateſt, nay the only Bleſſing he can beſtow upon Nations and Kingdoms; it being impoſſible for a Nation to ſubſiſt in any tolerable degree of Happineſs, without Peace: conſidering this, I ſay, 'tis but reaſonable to conclude, That as God did love his ancient people the Jews, when they obſerved his Statutes and Judgments which he gave them; and did bleſs and multiply them, and give them Peace, becauſe he loved them: ſo does he continue to do the ſame now to all the Nations and Kingdoms of the Earth. And that although his Bleſſings do come about in a larger Circuit, and after a more abſtruſe and intricate Manner now to what they did then; ſometimes carrying the viſible marks of deep humane Counſels and Contrivances, ſo that we may be apt to think them the works of Mens own hands, and ſometimes proceeding from a long Train and Series of unforeſeen and unexpected Accidents; ſo that Men may be apt to aſcribe them to Fortune or Chance; yet if we believe any thing of a ſuper-intending Providence, we muſt run all theſe remarkable Occurrences up to their Fountain-head, and derive them all in their various turnings and windings from God their Author. They do all of them proceed from him, who governs the World now by the ſame Rules of Wiſdom, Goodneſs

neſs and Juſtice, as he ever did, and ever will do; notwithſtanding the Executions of his Government are not, neither is it neceſſary they ſhould be, ſo immediate and viſible now, as they were formerly.

III. I obſerve, concerning Peace, how highly conducive it is to the advancement of God's Glory. The Glory of God is properly an Excellence of the Divine Nature, whereby God (as we may expreſs it for the help of our own Apprehenſions) does infinitely tranſcend all created Beings in the vaſtneſs of his perfections. The Scriptures, in condeſcention to our Capacities, do ſet it forth under the reſemblance of a King, with all his Glory and Majeſty about him. *The Lord is King, and hath put on glorious Apparel.* Pſ. 93. 1. *Thou art become exceeding glorious, thou art cloathed with Majeſty and Honour.* Pſ. 104. 1. And becauſe it is not for ſuch Creatures as we are, to appear before the Throne of God, and there to behold him in thoſe vaſt Effluviums of Glory, which proceed from the immenſe perfections of his Nature; therefore does God condeſcend to become viſible to us in the remoter works of his hands, and to let us ſee the back-parts of his eſſential Brightneſs and Luſtre, in ſome wonderfull Works either of Wiſdom, or Power, or Goodneſs, or Juſtice, or Mercy. Now when

when we ſay, that Peace conduces to the advancement of God's Glory; we are not to underſtand, as if Peace could make any real addition to the infinite Glories of God: for certainly God would have been infinitely Glorious in himſelf, whether ever he had made this World, or Man, or any thing belonging to them. But that Peace conduces to the ſetting forth of this Glory to the Obſervation, Eſteem and Admiration of the World. It cauſes Men to conceive reverend Thoughts of God; to admire and adore the infinite perfections of his Nature; and by all holy ways to ſet them off in their brighteſt Luſtre to others, that they may obſerve, admire and adore them too. Peace is a work of that Divine Original, Compoſure and Eſtabliſhment; it ſhews ſo much of a Divine Wiſdom, in contriving a fit way to appeaſe Mens outragious Luſts and Paſſions, and to ſatisfie ſo many different Humours, and Intereſts, and Religions, which are ſo furiouſly carried on in the times of War: it ſhews ſo much of a Divine Power, in over-ruling the deep Counſels and indefatigable Practices of ſo many different Parties; and cauſing them all to ſubmit *to*, and concenter *in* the all-wiſe Determinations of his Will: it ſhews ſo much of a Divine Goodneſs, in cloſing up the wide Ruptures of the World, in healing the ſad Breaches of War, in deliyering whole

whole Nations and Kingdoms from the brink of unavoidable Deſtruction, and reſtoring to them their Lives and Liberties, and all other deſireable things; that if men have not caſt off all ſenſe of God and a Providence, they muſt neceſſarily break forth into the devouteſt Admiration and Love of God, when at any time he is pleaſed to make Wars to ceaſe, and to bleſs the world with the return of Peace. They muſt needs *ſing Praiſes to the Honour of his Name, and make his Praiſe glorious.* Thus the holy Pſalmiſt, *Give unto the Lord, O ye Mighty, give unto the Lord Glory and Strength, give unto the Lord the Glory due unto his Name, worſhip the Lord in the Beauty of Holineſs.* And for what reaſon? why, *the Lord will give Strength unto his People, the Lord will bleſs his People with Peace,* Pſalm 29. 1, 2, 11.

IV. And laſtly, I ſhall now conclude with ſome Inferences from the whole, and with ſhewing you, after what manner, we of this Nation ſhall beſt glorifie God, for beſtowing this ineſtimable Bleſſing of Peace upon us.

1. From hence we may learn to be ſuitably affected with the Solemnity of this Day, and to put a very high eſteem and value upon the Peace we

now commemorate, as the greateſt Bleſſing could poſſibly come to our Nation. This we lie under a great obligation to do, upon the account of Gratitude to God, the Author of our Peace; who is pleaſed kindly to accept of ſo ~~ſplendid~~ ſlender a Compenſation for the many wonderfull Benefits we are dayly receiving from him. But this I ſhall have occaſion to enforce upon you more methodically by and by. At preſent, I ſhall only remind you of the ſad Miſeries of War, together with the bleſſed Benefits and Effects of Peace, as a ſufficient argument to make you prize this happy change of your condition, and to eſteem it as a Bleſſing, both to your ſelves and Children beyond compariſon.

'Tis true, indeed, we have not felt near the Miſeries that other Nations have, who were leſs concerned in the War than we were; and for this reaſon, 'tis to be fear'd, we ſhall be leſs Senſible of the Peace. We have had no Streams of Blood running down our Streets, nor Flames of Fire claſping about our Houſes, nor our Husbands, our Wives, our Children either famiſhed or ſlain. God be thanked, we have enjoyed a Peace in the midſt of War, to what our Neighbour-Nations have done. Our Sons have grown up as the young Plants, and our Daughters have been as the poliſh'd Corners of the Temple; our Garners have been full and plenteous

teous with all manner of Store, and our Sheep have brought forth Thouſands and ten Thouſands in our Streets. We have had the free exerciſe both of our Religion and Laws, Piety and Vertue, Learning and good Manners, Commerce and Trade; and all other things tending to the Good and Honour of a Nation, have in ſome meaſure, God be thanked, flouriſhed amongſt us. But what? Shall we deſpiſe the Bleſſing becauſe it comes ſo Cheap? Shall we grow ſick of it, becauſe it puts us to no more Pain? This is ſuch an odd ſort of an humour, that one would think Men ſhould never be guilty of it. So long as the Phyſick cures, what matter is it how inſenſibly it works? And ſo long as we enjoy Peace, let us be contented to have felt no more of the War. Peace is highly valuable, whether we compare it with War or no; and it ought with all reaſonable people to be eſteemed a Bleſſing at the end of a foreign and leſs calamitous War, as well as if our own Nation had been the bloody Stage of its Slaughters, and we our ſelves the greateſt Sufferers imaginable under the Calamities of it. Nay, I know not but the Bleſſing may be the greater; for now I am ſure, we have fewer Damages to repair, leſs Miſeries to bewail, more Comforts and Conveniencies left us to enjoy, and conſequently are the better qualified to derive a larger ſhare of

happineſs from the Influences of Peace. And to this give me leave to add, that God knows how ſoon our condition might have altered for the worſe if the War had continued much longer. Our Enemies, you know, were come to their laſt puſh, and that proves oftentimes very dangerous. They might have given us one ſparring Blow at their going off, which might have been of ill conſequence, and have proved very fatal to the quiet of our Nation. And though we ſhould have had but little reaſon to ſuſpect this, having ſo wiſe and brave a Prince to fight our Battles for us; yet conſidering that humane Strength and Policy are not always infallible, and that the greateſt Conduct of Princes, is oftentimes providentially diſappointed, becauſe their Subjects are unworthy of the benefits of it: We could have had no aſſurance that it ſhould not be ſo with us; but our condition, for ought any thing we know, might have altered much for the worſe, and our Nation in a very ſhort time, have been made the ſeat of the moſt barbarous Treatments ſince the beginning of the War.

In God's Name therefore, let us act like reaſonable Creatures, and prize the Bleſſing which the whole World is glad to enjoy. Let us think and ſpeak of it, as if we had a concern for our Country's good; as if our Religion, our Laws,

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our Liberties, our Properties were dear and tender to us; and we highly pleaſed to ſee them delivered from the mercileſs Storms of War, and brought into the calm and ſecure Port of an honourable, and as we truſt, laſting Peace.

2. From hence we may be able to look back upon our former Days of Faſting and Humiliation, and thoſe repeated Prayers we put up to God, for Deliverance from our Enemies; and *now* give ſome comfortable account of them, both to our ſelves and others, of their being accepted and heard. Our Enemies *now* will have no occaſion to reproach us, ſaying, *Where is their God?* Neither ſhall we our ſelves any more conceive ſuch hard thoughts of God, as to expoſtulate with him. *Wherefore have we faſted, and thou ſeeſt not? Wherefore have we afflicted our Soul, and thou takeſt no Knowledge?* For *now* we lie under a comfortable Aſſurance, that *he that is our God, is a God of Salvation. Now* we perceive the bleſſed fruits and benefits of putting our Truſt in the Lord, amidſt all our vaſt Preparations, our deep Counſels, our indefatigable Endeavours in carrying on the War, and making our Enemies yield to our own Terms and Conditions of Peace. Now we find what it is to have *waited patiently for the Lord*, and to have tarried his time for the Accompliſhment of his Mercies towards us: For having

Pſalm 79. 10.

Iſa. 58. 3

Pſalm 68. 20.

ving *waited*, we are not *ashamed*; and having *patiently endured*, we have *obtained the Promise*. Now we trust, that *Mercy and Truth are met together*, and that *Righteousness and Peace have kissed each other*.

3. Having *tasted and seen that the Lord is good*; let us resolve from henceforth to put our full trust and confidence in him; and believe, that with this great Blessing of Peace, he will bestow upon us whatever may contribute to a lasting and happy enjoyment of it. This is St. *Paul*'s argument with respect to God's great Love in redeeming Mankind by the death of his Son. *He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all; how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* i. e. give us all things necessary and convenient for the Completion of so great a Blessing. And (to use the same argument) since God has been pleased freely to bestow upon us so great a Blessing as Peace, let us firmly depend upon him for the Accommodation of all subservient Mercies, let us trust that he will bless the King with a long Life, as the Guardian-Angel of the Peace he has given us; and cause him to be as sweet a nursing Father in Peace, as he was our gallant Champion in War; that now having given repose to *Europe* by checking the Progress of so powerfull an Enemy abroad; he will secure *England*'s Peace, by turning his Arms against

againſt the inſulting Foe at home; I mean Vice and Prophaneneſs, Hereſies and Schiſms, which, ſo long as ſuffer'd amongſt us, will continually keep up a War in our Bowels, and make us the greater Sufferers by the Peace we have got. Let us truſt that he will direct our Counſels, and bleſs our Undertakings, and make us all obedient to Government, and loving one to another; that ſo our Peace may be a Bleſſing indeed, and the Effects of it, an univerſal Happineſs both to Church and State for many Generations.

4. From hence we may perceive, what ſtrong Obligations we lie under, to praiſe and glorifie the great God of Heaven and Earth, who, in great Mercy hath delivered us from the Calamities of War, and given us the ineſtimable Bleſſing of Peace within our Borders. There is ſo much of the Perfections of God ſhining forth in the works of Peace, eſpecially ſuch tranſcendent Rays of his Goodneſs, the very Flower and Beauty of all his Excellence; that we muſt not only be guilty of the greateſt Blindneſs, in not obſerving ſuch manifeſt diſcoveries of the divine Attributes in general; but likewiſe of the deepeſt Ingratitude, in ſuffering ſuch an Ocean of the Divine Goodneſs to run out upon our Score, without meeting with a ſuitable return of Glory and Praiſe from us. Now if we would

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make ſome gratefull return to God, for the ſignal Deliverances we this Day commemorate, and glorifie his Perfections as we ought to do, for beſtowing this Peace upon us:

We muſt in the firſt place, under a due ſenſe and eſteem of all God's Favours towards us; more eſpecially of this laſt ſignal diſplay of his Goodneſs in bleſſing us with Peace; we muſt ſend up our ſincere Acknowledgments to Heaven, and humbly thank God, the Author of our Life and Happineſs, for this, and all other his Favours towards us, ſince the beginning of the War. This is abſolutely neceſſary, in order to the ſetting forth of God's Glory upon all occaſions of his Goodneſs towards us; we muſt do it with a thankfull Heart, otherwiſe we ſhall never glorifie him aright. And therefore, *Rev.* 7. 12. we find *Thankſgiving* and *Honour to God* joyned together. And *Rom.* 1. 21. St. *Paul* gives a very good reaſon why the *Gnoſticks* did *not glorifie God as God*; they were *not thankfull.* And accordingly we find it to have been the conſtant practice of holy Men of old, eſpecially of that unimitable Pattern of Gratitude, and moſt devout Admirer and Publiſher of the Divine Goodneſs, the Royal Prophet *David*; to celebrate God's Honour and Glory for his loving Kindneſs towards them, with the utmoſt Thankfulneſs their inflamed Hearts

were

were capable of ſending forth. Thus *Pſalm* 107. 21, 22. *O that Men would praiſe the Lord for his Goodneſs, and for his wonderfull Works to the Children of Men! and let them ſacrifice the Sacrifice of Thankſgiving, and declare his Works with rejoycing.* And *Pſal.* 69. 30. *I will praiſe the Name of God with a Song, and will magnifie him with Thankſgiving*; and in the following Verſe he gives a very good reaſon for it; *This alſo ſhall pleaſe the Lord better than an Ox or Bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* This cheap return of Thankfulneſs to God for Peace, will pleaſe him better than all our ſumptuous and chargeable expreſſions of Joy. 'Twill reach the Heavens ſooner than our loudeſt Acclamations; and be more acceptable to God than our richeſt Banquets. For *will* God *eat the Fleſh of Bulls, or drink the Blood of Goats?* No, *offer unto God Thankſgiving*, for *whoſo offereth Praiſe*, he 'tis that *glorifieth* him.

And then becauſe God uſually works by a train of dependent means, and brings a people out of Miſery by degrees, and by a conſtant Succeſſion of many Favours and Mercies, which, like a Chain, hold altogether, and at length terminate in a general Happineſs. Therefore in our thankfull returns to God for this great Bleſſing of Peace, a Bleſſing which we have all along prayed for, and do now receive, as the very Crown and Perfection of all our

worldly Happineſs; we ſhould make very ſenſible Reflections *upon*, and be ſincerely thankfull *for* all thoſe Deliverances and Succeſſes which we have met with ſince the beginning of the War; as tending all of them in their own Nature, and by the kind Influences of Heaven, to produce this grand Happineſs of all, *viz.* Peace. O now we are got into the Land of *Canaan!* let us not be ſo ſtupid as to forget our Redemption out of *Egypt*. Let us ſtill *remember God's wonders of old*, though we cannot forbear being tranſported with his *preſent* Mercies. Let us ſtill remember *the Houſe of Bondage*; the *Hand* whereby, and the *Day* whereon we were *delivered* out of it.

Let us ſtill remember the many kind Stages of Providence, whereby we ſafely paſſed from Danger to Danger; from one hazardous Enterprize to another with Succeſs and Victory; till now at length we are arrived at our ſecure Port of Peace and Happineſs: and let us under a due ſenſe of all this, as a gracious method of Heaven in bringing to paſs this glorious work of Peace; let us add mightily to the Thanks of this Day, and accumulate our Praiſe-offerings to God, for ſuch a conſtant Succeſſion of Mercies towards us ſince the beginning of the War.

And

And this let us do, not only for a day or two, but for a conſiderable time to come; nay, for our whole lives, if it be poſſible, becauſe ſuch ſignal Mercies do require a conſiderable ſpace of time wherein gratefully to commemorate them; and becauſe we may reaſonably believe, that we ſhall enjoy the benefits of this Peace as long as we live. *While we live, therefore* let us *Praiſe the Lord*, and *while we have any being*, let us *ſing Praiſes to our God.*

Secondly, we muſt glorifie God in declaring his Goodneſs to others; that ſo we may ſtir them up to an admiration of the great God, and cauſe, if it were poſſible, the whole world to joyn together in adoring the infinite Perfections of his Nature. This is one great reaſon, why God does oftentimes ſo viſibly interpoſe his hand in humane affairs, *viz.* that men *may ſee, and know, and conſider, and underſtand together, that the hand of the Lord hath done this, and the holy one of Iſrael hath created it.* By the exerciſe of his Wiſdom, and Power, and Goodneſs in the affairs of the World, God would bring men to an acknowledgment of his Authority, to an obedience of his Laws, to a belief of his Word, to a dependence on and reſignation to him, in all the circumſtances of Life, and therefore it ſhould be the great concern of all men, as they tender the Glory

of God in the ſincere practice of Religion, to declare and make known his ſignal Providences thro' the World, and to endeavour in all ſincerity and gentleneſs to bring men over to a ſight and acknowledgment of them, that ſo they may ſay, *Verily there is a reward for the Righteous, verily there is a God that judgeth the Earth.*

Thirdly, we muſt glorifie God in our duty to the King. It redounds to the Glory of God, for *Cæſar* to have *the things which are Cæſar's*, as well as for *God* to have *the things which are God's*. For there is nothing wherein God does more plainly diſcover his infinite Perfections, than in the eſtabliſhment of Government upon Earth, and ordaining Kings to rule over us. Here his Wiſdom, his Juſtice, his Power, his Goodneſs do all of them appear in a moſt conſpicuous manner; and for men not to acknowledge their power, not to be obedient to their Laws, not to pay them them their Tributes, not to ſpeak reverently of them, not to honour them as God's Vicegerents upon Earth, is, I am ſure, to caſt dirt in God's face, and inſtead of honouring him, to affront him in the higheſt degree imaginable.

And now more eſpecially we have great reaſon to be very fruitfull in all the Branches of our duty to the King; for now after a great many Fatigues

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and dangers which he voluntarily expoſed himſelf to for our ſakes; he is returned home with the Olive-branch of Peace in his mouth, and will make us, if we are not wanting to our ſelves, a flouriſhing and happy people. 'Tis to his Goodneſs and Love, to his Wiſdom and Care, to his Courage and Conduct under God, that we owe our Preſervation and Peace; and therefore to him, next to God, let us aſcribe all due Thanks and Honour, all juſt Admiration and Praiſe, all ſincere Love and Obedience, as the ſeaſonable inſtrument of all our Happineſs. Let him now live in Peace, ſince he has made it himſelf, and not find it a harder thing to get the Hearts of his Subjects, than the Necks of his Enemies.

Fourthly, We muſt glorifie God in the amendment of our Lives. And here 'tis, that we ſhall glorifie God indeed; this is the greateſt Glory we can poſſibly give to God, and that which he expects from us as a moſt reaſonable ſervice at all times; but more eſpecially when he has been pleaſed to confer any ſignal benefits upon us. *He hath ſhew'd thee O man ſuch things as be good*: He hath delivered thee from great Evils, and eſtabliſhed thee in a happy condition; *and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God. Let the light*, therefore, *ſo ſhine before men*,

men, that they may ſee your good works, and glorifie your Father which is in Heaven. Having your converſation honeſt among the Gentiles, that whereas they ſpeak againſt you as evil-doers, they may by your good works, which they ſhall behold, glorifie God in the day of Viſitation.

Fifthly, more particularly let me recommend to you mutual Love and Affection one towards another, and that *to your Godlineſs* in general, you would add *Brotherly Kindneſs* in particular. This I am ſure the Apoſtle looks upon as very inſtrumental towards the promoting of God's Glory. *Now the God of Patience and Conſolation grant you to be like-minded one towards another*; and for what reaſon? but *that they might with one mind and one mouth glorifie the Father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* As it conduces to the Honour of a Maſter, to have his Family in good order; and to the Honour of a King, to keep his Subjects in Quietneſs and Peace; ſo it highly conduces to the Honour of the great God, when his Creatures live in a mutual Love and Eſteem of each other. They do thereby ſignifie their obedience to his Laws, and copy out that great original, who is Love it ſelf, and whoſe tender Mercies are over all his works. Let us then, in the Name of God, lay aſide all Diſputes and Differences, all Rancour, and Malice, and Revenge, and live in the

the ſincere Love and Friendſhip of one another. Now we have Peace, let us *live* in Peace; now we have Peace from our Enemies, let us not be ſo fooliſh as to throw up the Ball among our ſelves; never let it be ſaid, that we have brought the War Home. And let me beſeech you to lay the Ax to the Root of the Tree, I mean of this pernicious Tree of Animoſities and Diſſentions, which does oftentimes ſpread it ſelf ſo impiouſly large, as to laſh, not only the King and Government, but Religion it ſelf, and God the Author of it. The Root is little private Whiſperings, and Reſentments, and Grudges, and Miſ-underſtandings of one another, in things of ſmall moment and value; which in time do advance to that height, as contumelioufly to diſgorge themſelves upon a Man's King, and his God too. I am verily perſwaded, that moſt of our differences in Church and State, are in a great meaſure owing to theſe little Miſ-underſtandings and Reſentments in our private Converſation: and therefore, as we tender the Glory of God in the Unity of the Church, and the good of Government in the Honour of the King; let us now lay them all aſide, and expell them our Neighbourhood for ever. And if we muſt keep up Contentions amongſt us, let our only Contentions be, who ſhall forgive firſt, and love beſt; let our only Contentions be, who

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ſhall moſt devoutly ſerve God, who ſhall moſt entirely affect his King, who ſhall moſt vigorouſly promote the Publick Good: And then we may expect that God will bleſs us, and ſuffer us to enjoy the Peace which he has given us, and which, he ſees, we are ſo carefull to keep and preſerve.

Sixthly and Laſtly, We muſt glorifie God in our Charity to the Poor. *He that giveth Alms, ſacrificeth Praiſe. To do good, and to communicate forget not, for with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.*

Now to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghoſt, Three Perſons, but one God of Love and Peace, be aſcribed all Glory, Honour, Might, Majeſty, and Dominion, both now and for ever. Amen.

FINIS.